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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 DHA-02 ACDA-07 AID-05 OMB-01 IO-13 TRSE-00
EB-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /086 W
----------221435Z 067511 /46
O R 221253Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2891
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 5804

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, IN, PK
SUBJECT: THE PAKISTAN CRISIS: AN OFFICIAL INDIAN VIEW

1. THE GOI IS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN PAKISTAN, FEARING THAT IT COULD DEGENERATE INTO CIVIL WAR AND CHAOS WHICH WOULD POSE A THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF THE REGION. MEA JOINT SECRETARY I.P. SINGH TOLD THE ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR ON APRIL 22 THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO DESIRE ON THE PART OF THE GOI TO INTERFERE IN ANY WAY IN THE CURRENT SITUATION. THE GOI IS AT PAINS TO REGARD IT AS STRICTLY AN INTERNAL MATTER, ACCORDING TO SINGH. FOR THIS REASON REMARKS BY BHUTTO AND EDITORIALS IN THE PAKISTANI TIMES WHICH HAVE SPOKEN OF ENEMIES OF PAKISTAN HOVERING LIKE VULTURES DURING THE CURRENT CRISIS HAVE BEEN STUDIOUSLY IGNORED BY THE GOI. IN SINGH'S WORDS, "ALL WE WANT IS A PEACEFUL PAKISTAN".

2. THE KEY QUESTION IN THE GOI'S MIND AT THIS POINT IS WHETHER OR NOT BHUTTO AUTHORIZED THE ARMY TO DECLARE MARTIAL LAW OR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAKISTANI ARMY TOOK IT UPON ITSELF TO DO SO. SINGH DOES NOT RULE OUT A BHUTTO COMEBACK. HE SAYS THE MEA BELIEVES THAT MARTIAL LAW OFFERS BHUTTO A GRACE PERIOD DURING WHICH HE CAN STILL AVEE TO RESIGN IN THE INTEREST OF PAKISTANI DEMOCRACY. IN THIS EVENT, THEORIZED SINGH, BHUTTO COULD STILL WAGE A TOUCH ELECTORAL FIGHT, IN THE FUTURE, BUT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY LOSE. SINGH SAID THAT BHUTTO'S DAYS WERE NUMBERED, BUT ADDED THAT THE MANNER OF HIS

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DEPARTURE WAS STILL OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. SINGH DOES NOT BELIEVE THE PAN WILL TAKE TO THE STREETS AGAINST THE ARMY, NOR DOES HE BELIEVE BHUTTO WANTS THE ARMY TO COME TO POWER. MOREOVER, SINGH BELIEVES THAT THE ARMY ITSELF DOES NOT WANT TO PLAY THIS ROLE, ALTHOUGH HE SAYS HE CANNOT BE SURE THERE ARE NOT AMBITIOUS OFFICERS WHO ONCE AGAIN MIGHT FIND THE TEMPTATION TOO GREAT TO RESIST.

3. SPECULATING ON A FUTURE GOVT IN PAKISTAN, SINGH SAID THAT NO MATTER WHO CONSTITUTES IT, INDIA WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT. HE ASSERTED BHUTTO WAS THE BEST STATESMAN PAKISTAN HAD YET PRODUCED AND ADDED THAT ALL THINGS BEING EQUAL THE GOI WOULD PREFER TO DEAL WITH HIM. IT COULD HARDLY DO THAT, HOWEVER, IF BHUTTO HAD NO INTERNAL SUPPORT. THE DIVERSE ELEMENTS OF THE PNA DO NOT SUGGEST A HAPPY ALTERNATIVE, SINGH IMPLIED, BUT HE ADMITTD THERE COULD BE A PARALLEL WITH THE JANATA GOVT IN INDIA AND REASONED THAT MEN IN RESPONSIBLE POSITIONS ACT DIFFERENTLY THAN THEY DO IN OPPOSITION. IN SINGH'S OPINION THERE ARE ELEMENTS OF THEPNA SUCH AS THE NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY WHICH ARE MORE PROGRESSIVE THAN ANY ELEMENTS IN THE PPP.

4. TURNING TO THE SHAH NAWAZ'S VISIT, SINGH SAID THIS WAS STRICTLY A REASSURANCE MISSION. SHAH NAWAZ WANTED TO HEAR THAT INDIA IS RECOMMITTED TO THE SIMLA PROCESS: "WE WERE APPY TO GIVE HIM THOSE ASSURANCES", SAID SINGH. SHAH NAWZ ALSO RAISED THE PAKISTAN INITIATIVE FOR A DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ECONOMIC SUMMIT. SINGH SAID THE GOI EXPLAINED THERE WAS LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS PROJECT, BUT THAT INDIA DID NOT OPPOSE IT AND TOLD SHAH NAWAZ THEY WOULD NOT LOBBY AGAINST IT. SINGH POINTED OUT THERE IS, HOWEVER,
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A PARAGRAPH IN THE NACCFM STATEMENT WHICH IS A MILD REBUFF TO THE PAKISTANI INITIATIVE. SINGH ADDED THAT THE INDIANS DID NOT PROPOSE THAT LANGUAGE BUT HE IMPLIED THEY DID NOT OBJECT VERY MUCH TO IT EITHER.

5. SINGH CHARACTERIZED THE APRIL 11 TO 14 TRADE TALKS AS MOST CORDIAL. HE SAID INDIA WAS CONCERNED THAT THE 300 MILLION RUPEE TRADE REPRESENTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY PAKISTANI PURCHASES FROM INDIA AND ADDED THAT THE GOI WAS ANXIOUS TO SEE TRILATERAL TRADE BROUGHT INTO A BETTER BALANCE. SEVERAL PROPOSALS WERE MADE AT THE MEETING, HE SAID, AND THE INDIAN SIDE IS STUDYING THEM
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Executive Order: X1
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